

## NOTES AND NEWS.

CHARLES WICKLIFFE BECKHAM was born near Bardstown, Kentucky, August 1, 1856, and died there at his home June 8, 1888. His father was a lawyer and member of the Legislature of Kentucky at the time of his decease, some eight or ten years ago. His mother, who survives him, was a daughter of the late Governor Charles C. Wickliffe, of Kentucky. Mr. Beckham was educated at a private school near Bardstown, and when seventeen years old was for one or two years a student at the University of Virginia. After that he was attached to the Geological Survey of Kentucky under Professor Shaler, for about two years. He then followed Professor Shaler to Harvard University where he spent a year in scientific studies. He was then appointed, by the Hon. J. Proctor Knott, of Kentucky, clerk of the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives, at Washington, where he remained for four years. Afterwards he went to Pueblo, Colorado, where for about a year he engaged in mercantile pursuits; thence returned to Washington and became connected with the National Museum. While clerk to the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives he studied law, attending for a portion of the term, the Columbia Law School in Washington. About two years before his death he was induced to turn his attention to the practice of law, as a patent solicitor, and entered the office of Mr. Pollock, where he was engaged with great promise of success when his fatal disease began to develop itself.

Mr. Beckham's talent for mathematical and physical science, united to other qualities, formed a rare combination from which his friends argued that he would win success. But Providence decreed otherwise. It was in the effort to throw off disease that he spent a winter in Texas, employing his time making a collection of birds, a fine series of which he presented to the National Museum. Returning from Texas for a few months, he resumed his labors at Washington, but again attacked by illness he went to Louisiana and spent the winter with his uncle, Governor R. C. Wickliffe, near St. Francisville. Growing worse, he returned, with his mother, to Bardstown, where he died, after extreme suffering. "All that friends and relatives and medical skill could do were of no avail. He died without an enemy, and was followed to the grave by the tears and tender regrets of all who had ever known him." During his connection with the Department of Birds of the National Museum, Mr. Beckham proved an intelligent and able assistant, while his gentle, genial, and unassuming manners, and gentlemanly deportment won for him the genuine regard of his associates. Owing to his ill health, he was not able to devote much of his leisure time to the labor of original research in his favorite study, but he managed to write several papers, each of which is a valuable contribution to the subject to which it relates, being characterized by an unusual degree of painstaking care and unbiased judgment; and had he been able to write more would undoubtedly have won for himself a high rank among ornithologists.

A nearly complete list of Mr. Beckham's ornithological papers is subjoined herewith:

- Short Notes on the Birds of Bayou Sara, Louisiana. *Bull. Nutt. Orn. Club*, Vol. VII, 1882, pp. 159-165.
- The Black-throated Bunting in Florida. *Bull. Nutt. Orn. Club*, Vol. VII, 1882, p. 250.
- A List of the Birds of Bardstown, Nelson County, Kentucky. *Journ. Cincinnati Soc. Nat. Hist.*, Vol. VI, pp. 136-147. July, 1883.
- List of the Birds of Nelson County [Kentucky]. *Kentucky Geological Survey*. Sept., 1885.
- Notes on Some of the Birds of Pueblo, Colorado. *The Auk*, Vol. II, 1885, pp. 139-144.
- A White-winged Junco in Maryland. *The Auk*, Vol. II, 1885, p. 306.
- Remarks on the Plumage of *Regulus calendula*. *Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus.*, Vol. VIII, No. 40, Dec. 7, 1885, pp. 625-628.
- Changes in the Plumage of *Geothlypis trichas*. *The Auk*, Vol. III, 1886, pp. 279-281.
- First Plumage of the Summer Tanager. *The Auk*, Vol. III, 1886, p. 487. [Here described for the first time.]
- The Red-breasted Nuthatch in Kentucky in Summer. *The Auk*, Vol. III, 1886, p. 489.
- Scarcity of Adult Birds in Autumn. *The Auk*, Vol. IV, 1887, pp. 79-80.
- Additional Notes on the Birds of Pueblo County, Colorado. *The Auk*, Vol. IV, 1887, pp. 120-125. [The list published in a previous number (Vol. II, pp. 139-144) increased from 91 to 112, and "additional notes" given on 29 species mentioned in the first list.]
- Additions to the Avifauna of Bayou Sara, La. *The Auk*, Vol. IV, 1887, pp. 299-306. [Very interesting remarks on the birds of that locality, including 27 additions to an earlier list (*Bull. Nutt. Orn. Club*, Vol. VII, 1882, pp. 159-165.)]
- Occurrence of the Florida Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata florincola*) in Southwestern Texas. *The Auk*, Vol. V, 1888, p. 112.
- A Philadelphia Vireo and a Cobweb. *The Auk*, Vol. V, 1888, p. 115. [The Vireo entangled in and held fast by the cobweb.]—R. R.

PHILIP HENRY GOSSE, F. R. S., well known as an English naturalist of note, died in London, August 27, at the age of seventy-eight years. He spent much of his early life in America, visiting Newfoundland when seventeen years of age, and spending many subsequent years here, in Lower Canada, and the United States, and later in Jamaica. Besides publishing many standard works and papers on British marine zoölogy, he was the author of several works of travel relating to the natural history of the countries he visited, including his 'Canadian Naturalist' (1840), 'Letters from Alabama on Natural History' (1859), and 'A Naturalist's Sojourn in Jamaica' (1851). He was also the author of 'The Birds of Jamaica' (1847), and 'Illustrations of the Birds of Jamaica' (1849), works giving him an established position as an ornithologist, besides various

minor papers on ornithological subjects. He was the father of Edmund W. Gosse, the critic and poet.

THE SIXTH Congress of the American Ornithologists' Union will be held in Washington, D. C., beginning Nov. 13. A circular of information will soon be sent to members by the Secretary, giving information as to where the sessions will be held, etc. The meeting promises to be one of unusual importance and interest.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM has recently made an important addition to its collection of North American birds through its purchase of Mr. H. W. Henshaw's fine series, numbering about 12,000 specimens. The Henshaw collection, having been carefully revised by Mr. Ridgway, thus carrying his identifications, transfers to the British Museum an authoritatively labelled collection of North American birds, which will be of great assistance to our English friends in determining just what American ornithologists mean by the names they give to American birds.

THE REPORT of the U. S. Commissioner of Agriculture for the year 1887, recently issued, contains an interesting report (pp. 399-456) on the work accomplished by the Division of Economic Ornithology and Mammalogy. Besides a general statement of the progress of the work by Dr. C. Hart Merriam, Chief of the Division, the report contains the following special papers: (1) 'Food of Hawks and Owls,' by Dr. A. K. Fisher, Assistant Ornithologist; (2) 'Experiments in Poisoning,' by the same author; (3) 'Some of the Results of a Trip through Minnesota and Dakota,' by Vernon Bailey, Special Field Agent; (4) 'Notes on the Depredations of Blackbirds and Gophers in Iowa and Southern Minnesota,' by Dr. Fisher. Two 'Bulletins' are in press, one on the English Sparrow, and one on Bird Migration in the Mississippi Valley, the latter by Professor W. W. Cooke. The English Sparrow report is based on replies received "from more than 3,000 persons," in answer to circulars and 'schedules sent out by the Department asking for information. The preparation of this large amount of material for publication has been assigned to Professor W. B. Barrows, Assistant Ornithologist.

DR. M. A. MENZBIER has issued a prospectus of a work on the 'Ornithologie du Turkestan et des pays adjacents,' to be issued in parts, large quarto in size, with colored plates. The work will form six volumes with eighty to ninety plates, and will be based on the collections and notes made by the late Dr. N. A. Sewertzow, during his eight expeditions, under the auspices of the Russian government, during the years 1857 to 1878. The territory explored extends from Mount Tarbogataë on the east to the Volga on the west, and from Western Siberia on the north to the Hindoo-Koosh on the south. The work will be based on ample material and its publication is expected to extend over five or six years. The specimen pages and plates issued with the prospectus indicate care and thoroughness in the preparation of the work, for which the author is eminently qualified. The cost of the complete work will be about \$150.

FOREIGN ornithologists are responding liberally to the call for funds for the erection of the proposed monument to Audubon, their gifts being often accompanied by expressions of hearty appreciation of the great naturalist and his work. An eminent German ornithologist writes: "Enclosed in this letter I send you . . . as a small contribution for the monument to Audubon, whose memory is so dear and so much venerated by all who have worked in ornithological science." Another says: "By Imperial post I have the honor to send you . . . as a small contribution for the Audubon Monument in the hope that even so small a sum will be kindly received as a sign of the high esteem for the great American ornithologist, so much admired in Europe and by all brother ornithologists." If Americans feel the same interest and respect for Audubon they are certainly slow in manifesting it in the same substantial way as foreign ornithologists are doing, as shown by the following list of contributions submitted by the Chairman of the A. O. U. Audubon Committee (Mr. Wm. Dutcher, 51 Liberty St., New York City), as covering the period from June 11 to September 14: O. F., Bremen, \$4.71; Dr. A. von Pelzeln, \$5; Prof. F. Ferrari-Perez, \$10.00; B. H. Dutcher, \$1.00; W. Dutcher, \$3.00. Total, \$133.71.—In the July Auk (p. 336) the credit to "Dr. R. Blasius, \$8.00," should stand as follows: Dr. W. Blasius, \$3.00; Dr. R. Blasius, \$5.00.

BESIDES the continuation of Professor Evermann's paper on the birds of Indiana, and Mr. Scott's article on the birds of Southern Florida, the following papers are in hand awaiting publication in future numbers of 'The Auk': 'Notes on the Habits, Nests, and Eggs of the Subgenus *Passerella*,' by Capt. Charles E. Bendire; 'Notes on the Habits, Nests, and Eggs of *Dendragapus obscurus fuliginosus*,' by Capt. Charles E. Bendire; 'On the Summer Birds of Berkshire County, Massachusetts,' by Walter Faxon; 'Oölogical System,' by Josiah Hoopes; 'An Account of the Breeding Habits of *Puffinus auduboni* in the Island of Grenada, West Indies,' by George N. Lawrence; 'Remarks upon Abnormal Coloring of Plumage observed in some species of Birds,' by George N. Lawrence; 'On the Subdivisions of the Family Cypselidæ,' by Frederic A. Lucas; 'Notes on the Birds of White Top Mountain, Virginia,' by William C. Rives, Jr., M. D.; 'Revision of the Clapper Rails,' by George B. Sennett; 'On the Position of the Genus *Chamaea* in the System,' by R. W. Shufeldt; 'The 'Booming' of the Bittern', by Bradford Torrey. Also numerous 'General Notes,' and reviews of ornithological publications.